

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 AID-20 DPW-01 IO-14 OMB-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 NIC-01

NEAE-00 SR-02 ORM-03 DRC-01 /159 W

----- 028476

P 250946Z FEB 74

FM AMCONSUL LAHORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9889

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY

AMCONSUL KARACHI

USINT CAIRO

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, BG, IN, PK

SUBJECT: ISLAMIC SUMMIT: BANGLADESH AND PAKISTAN

REF: LAHORE 0290

BEGIN SUMMARY: BANGLADESH PRIME MINISTER MUJIBUR RAHMAN AND PAKISTAN PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO SPENT DAY FEB 24 BEING NICE TO EACH OTHER AND HOLDING SERIES OF PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS. BOTH MEN TOLD PRESS THEY EXPECTED DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES WOULD BE ESTABLISHED "SOON." BHUTTO SAID HE HAD ACCEPTED SHEIKH'S INVITATION TO VISIT DACCA, THOUGH NO DATE WAS SET. MUJIB AND EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT SADAT SAID "SATISFACTORY" SOLUTION TO PROBLEM OF 195 POWS WOULD BE FOUND; HOWEVER, MUJIB SAID ISSUE HAD TO BE DECIDED AT TRIPARTITE CONFERENCE OF BANGLADESH, INDIA AND PAKISTAN, WHICH HE HOPED WOULD TAKE PLACE "SOON." MUJIB SAID HE HAD ALREADY "STOPPED"

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TRIALS OF POWS. END SUMMARY.

1. IN PRESS CONFERENCE SHORTLY AFTER CONCLUSION OF ISLAMIC SUMMIT CONFERENCE DURING EARLY HOURS OF FEB 25, PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO INDICATED THAT DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH WOULD BE ESTABLISHED IN NEAR FUTURE. HE SAID HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT PROBLEM OF 195 POWS WOULD BE RESOLVED IN "SATISFACTORY MANNER," AND THAT THE EXPECTED "FAVORABLE RESPONSE" FROM SHEIKH MUJIB ON QUESTION. HE SAID NOW THAT RECOGNITION HAD BEEN CLEARED BY BOTH COUNTRIES, HE WOULD LEAVE IT TO BDG TO "TAKE NECESSARY STEPS FOR FURTHER NORMALIZATION." HE ALSO INDICATED THAT FOREIGN MINISTERS OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN WOULD MEET SOON, UNDER TERMS OF DELHI AGREEMENT. (MUJIB AT ABOUT SAME HOUR TOLD ANOTHER PRESS CONFERENCE HE EXPECTED REPRESENTATIVES OF BANGLADESH, INDIA AND PAKISTAN TO MEET AND "FIND SOME SATISFACTORY SOLUTION TO THE QUESTION OF 195 POWS.") BHUTTO ANNOUNCED THAT HE HAD ACCEPTED MUJIB'S INVITATION TO VISIT BANGLADESH, AND SAID HE HOPED TO ADDRESS A PUBLIC MEETING AT DACCA'S PALTON MAIDAN. HE SAID NO DATE HAD BEEN SET FOR VISIT.

2. PRIME MINISTER RAHMAN TOLD PRESS CONFERENCE BEFORE DEPARTING FOR DACCA ABOARD BANGLADESH BIMAN PLANE EARLY HOURS FEB 25 THAT HE HAD ALREADY "STOPPED" TRIALS OF 195 POWS AND HOPED QUESTION WOULD SOON BE SOLVED "SATISFACTORILY." HE SAID DELHI AGREEMENT WAS VERY CLEAR ON THIS QUESTION, AND THAT FUTURE OF 195 WOULD BE DISCUSSED AT TRIPARTITE CONFERENCE BETWEEN BANGLADESH, INDIA AND PAKISTAN. ASKED WHEN SUCH A CONFERENCE MIGHT BE EXPECTED, HE SAID, "WITHOUT DISCUSSING IT WITH PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO, IT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO SAY." ASKED WHEN HE EXPECTED DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH TO BE ESTABLISHED, SHEIKH SAID, "AS SOON AS POSSIBLE."

3. AT PRE-DAPRATURE PRESS CONFERENCE MID-DAY FEB 24, EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT SADAT DECLARED THAT HE COULD ASSURE LISTENERS THAT, ON QUESTION OF 195 PAKISTANI POWS, "THERE WILL BE A RESPONSE FROM BROTHER SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN." HE SAID HE "KNEW" THAT MUJIB WOULD HAVE "POSITIVE RESPONSE TO PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO'S GESTURE" AT EARLY DATE. ASKED WHAT ROLE HE PLAYED IN BRINGING ABOUT RECONCILIATION BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES, SADAT HAD NO COMMENT. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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(COMMENT: ACCORDING TO SEVERAL OF OUR SOURCES, MUJIB HAS BEEN TELLING OTHER DELEGATIONS AT ISLAMIC SUMMIT THAT HE CAME TO LAHORE BECAUSE HE OWED HIS LIFE TO SADAT. HE REPORTEDLY EXPWAINED THAT HE BELIEVED HE WOULD HAVE BEEN EXECUTED BY FORMER PRESIDENT YAHYA IF IT HAD NOT BEEN FOR STRONG PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM SADAT TO YAHYA WARNING LATTER NOT TO HARM SHEIKH.)

4. BANGLADESH AMBASSADOR TO EGYPT, ATAUR REHMAN KHAN ARRIVED

IN LAHORE FEB 24 TO JOIN BANGLADESH DELEGATION AT ISLAMIC SUMMIT. AMBASSADOR SAID HE HAD BEEN SUMMONED BY PRIME MINISTER RAHMAN, BUT REFUSED TO TELL PRESS WHY HE HAD COME EXCEPT TO SAY THAT HE HAD "PROBABLY BEEN CONSIDERED NECESSARY" BECAUSE HE WAS POSTED AT CAIRO, WHICH WAS "HUB OF INTENSE ACTIVITY." HE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT "COMMUNICATION BETWEEN BANGLADESH AND PAKISTAN WOULD BE ESTABLISHED VERY SOON."

5. IN HIS BRIEF SPEECH TO ISLAMIC SUMMIT CONFERENCE FEB 24, SHEIKH MUJIB EXPRESSED APPRECIATION THAT BANGLADESH COULD ATTEND CONFERENCE AND THANKED ALL THOSE WHO HAD HELPED MAKE THAT POSSIBLE, PARTICULARLY PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO. BHUTTO RECIPROCATED THROUGHOUT VISIT BY PUBLICLY EVENING WARM FRIENDSHIP FOR SHEIKH, AND BY MAKING SPECIAL POINT IN CONCLUDING REMARKS AT SUMMIT CONFERENCE IN THANKING BANGLADESH DELEGATION FOR COMING TO LAHORE.

6. DAILY JAMHOOR (INDEPENDENT) FEB 25 QUOTES "INFORMED DIPLOMATIC SOURCES" AS SAYING BANGLADESH MISSION WOULD SOON BE ESTABLISHED IN ISLAMABAD AND THAT THERE WAS STRONG POSSIBILITY OF RESUMPTION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND INDIA. PAPER SPECULATED THAT BANGLADESH WOULD APPOINT K.G. MUSTFA (FORMER PRESIDENT OF LEFTIST PAKISTAN FEDERAL UNION OF JOURNALISTS) AS AMBASSADOR TO PAKISTAN AND THAT GOP WOULD APPOINT ABDULLAH MALIK (CHIEF REPORTER OF DAILY IMROZE) AS AMBASSADOR TO BANGLADESH. PAPER ALSO SPECULATED THAT CML LEADER SARDAR SHAUKAT HYAT KHAN WOULD GO TO NEW DELHI AS AMBASSADOR.

7. OPPOSITION PRESS REPORTS CONTINUING MINOR DEMONSTRATIONS AROUND PUNJAB AGAINST GOP RECOGNITION OF BANGLADESH. IT ALSO QUOTES JAMAAT-I-ISLAMI (JI) AND TEHRIK-I-ISTIQLAL (TI) LEADERS AS CONDEMNING RECOGNITION DURING PRESS CONFERENCES FEB 24. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PRESS SAYS THAT JI AMIR WILL ADDRESS PARTY WORKERS AT LAHORE EVENING FEB 25 AND THAT TI CHIEF AIR MARSHALL ASGHAR KHAN PLANS TO KICK OFF PROTEST MOVEMENT OVER RECOGNITION WITH PUBLIC MEETING AT JHELMUM MARCH 1. OPPOSITION DAILY NAWAI-I-WAQT FINALLY PUBLISHED EDITORIAL ON BANGLADESH RECOGNITION FEB 25 (SEE PARA 6 REFTEL). WHILE IT DID NOT PRAISE BHUTTO FOR RECOGNITION DECISIONS, EDITORIAL SEEMED TO BE RESIGNED TO FACT, AND EXPRESSED HOPE THAT THINGS WOULD WORK OUT FOR BEST. PAPER ASSERTED THAT PAKISTAN PUBLIC WAS "SAD" ABOUT RECOGNITION AND WARNED THAT IF HUMAN PROBLEMS IN SUB-CONTINENT (BIHARIS, BENGALIS, POWS, ETC.) WERE NOT SOON SOLVED, LEADERS OF THREE NATIONS WOULD FACE MORE PROBLEMS.

8. COMMENT: WHILE SOME UNHAPPINESS ABOUT GOP RECOGNITION OF BANGLADESH CAN BE EXPECTED TO ARISE, WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE

THAT BHUTTO CAN HOLD PUNJAB IN LINE. IF POPULAR REACTION
TO SHEIKH MUJIB AT SHALIMAR GARDENS RECEPTION AFTERNOON FEB 24
IS ANY GUIDE, THERE IS CONSIDERABLE RESERVE OF EMOTIONAL GOOD
WILL FOR SHEIKH IN PUNJAB.
KING

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